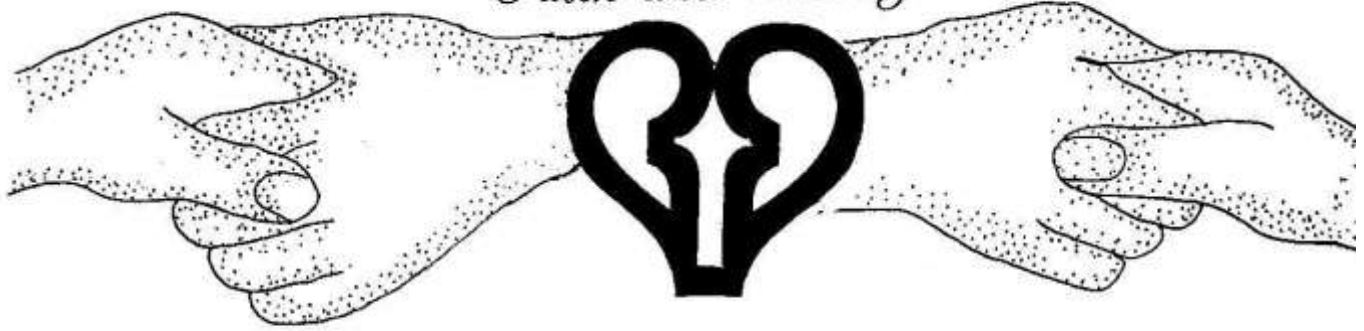


Faith and Sharing



Heart - to - Heart

North American Bulletin

April 2019
Volume 45, no. 2

Theme of this bulletin: ***“Blessed are the poor”***

Where are the poor?



By Jean-Claude Lizotte, Quebec City

Where are the poor among us?
In our families, in our friends and in society?

How do we look at them?

Are they badly dressed, dirty and smelly?

How do we judge them?

Sick, lost, lazy and living on welfare?

Can they be my neighbor or strangers?

I think sometimes I can not see them because they scare me.

I am afraid to become like them.

So I avoid them and I feel relieved.

I turn to the right people.

I will be safe from all, enough to myself.

Then comes the moment when I have to find happiness. If I am poor or rich, I look for it.

I find it especially in the teaching of Jesus.

He tells us to love our neighbor as ourselves.

All who love as Jesus are happy because they find Him in the other.

Impossible to do otherwise.



In my everyday life, I want to live this Love with my neighbor.

Also, I thank God for living it at Faith and Sharing for 30 years.

Unconditional welcome is the beginning of accepting others as they are without judgment. People like Louise Bergeron who passed away recently and many others have taught me.

I must admit that I too am poor. I need prayer and other people to find Jesus in my life. 💙

Poem

Heart-to-Heart

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*Poem by John Campbell
from a summer retreat some years ago
Vancouver Island*

Many devotions... One God, a loving God with everything
- means expressing our praise and adoration to our creator,
our redeemer and our saviour with all the talent we can.

Then hope to Jesus.

Our love is worthy.

Expressions of praising our Lord take many forms not just
prayer;

picture painting,

photography,

collage

making,

poetry,

a musical solo,

jamming or

leading song

for people to

make a joyful

noise,

organizing,

facilitating,

and participation.

All worthwhile praise needs a Holy motivation for honour and
glory to our Lord:

with all the heart, all the soul, all the strength and all the
mind. 💙



John and Kenny

Theme of upcoming issue

October 2019 (dead line: September 15, 2019): "***My prayer to Jesus***"

Heart to Heart with Jean Vanier

90 years old!

Extracts from the "Letter from Jean",
October 2018

90 years old! My God, I can scarcely believe it. I have such a desire to shout out my thanks! First, to God who is at the source of my life. I have been a poor, little child of God since the first moment of my life, secret and hidden in the womb of my mother. It was the moment of my primal innocence before all my reactions of fear, of aggression and especially of guilt, which are born when this primal innocence is wounded.



(...)

Little by little, we became aware of what a cardinal in Rome told us, "You at L'Arche, you have achieved a Copernican revolution! Until now, it was said that we must do good to the poor, but at L'Arche you say that it is the poor who do you good!" Perhaps today, I would say that it is not only people with disabilities but all those who have been humiliated and put aside who transform us if we enter into relationship with them. 💜

To see the full "Letter from Jean": <https://www.jean-vanier.org/en/node/193>

"Blessed are the poor! "



By Angèle Gagné osu, Gaspé

In the Chouraqui Bible (French translation), instead of the word "Blessed", it is written: "En marche" ("On the move")!

So, walk you poor! I really like that because it's more dynamic, more active.

Yes, on the march, you poor people!

I am inspired by what François Varillon writes in his book "*Jesus, meditations*", presented by Charles Ehlinger. And also from the apostolic exhortation of Pope Francis: "*Rejoice and be glad.*"

On the march, it is helping to get out of it; do everything to live happy.


By proclaiming the Beatitudes, I see that Jesus describes himself because "from the rich that he was in God, he became poor for us, to enrich us with his poverty". (2Co 8, 9)

Jesus is still on the move ...

The poor, the true poor, are the ones who rely on ... who gives credit to the good God. The word CREDIT and CREDO is the same thing. Trust, hope!

The poor seek. "Seek God, the humble ones of the earth. Seek justice." (Zephaniah 2, 3)

Like Jesus, the poor are not afraid to love and they are free! The apostles left many "things" to follow Jesus. Women have gone through the laws, prejudices, the forbidden to follow Jesus with courage. They found in Him a man different from the teachers of the law and the Pharisees. A man free and in love!

Mary welcomed in herself the Seed of God because she was humble, small and poor. She and Joseph trusted each other because both had a poor heart. Pope Francis tells us: "To be poor in heart is holiness. » 

"Blessed are the poor"



*By Sister Claudette Dumont,
Quebec City*

As I begin to write my thoughts, I find in my notes this idea that I have borrowed, even if I do not have the reference:

"More than a text to ponder, the Beatitudes are a project entrusted to the Church, which, from century to century, must examine how to overcome poverty, sow happiness, restore their dignity to those who have lost it or who have been dispossessed."

In the book: "Jesus retrieved: The essential for those who seek Him" by Marie and Gérard Sévérin, the Beatitude is stated as: "What a chance for those who are lacking deep inside themselves! Yes, it is for them, the Kingdom of Heaven. "

The teaching of Jesus ignites with the "Beatitudes" or "Blessings". Those who have placed the Kingdom of Heaven at the centre of their lives are "Blessed".

In this novelty, Jesus summarizes his message of love and consolation, hope and confidence, peace and gentleness.

By this Beatitude, Jesus does not encourage misery, lack of necessities and basic needs. No, he encourages the trust in the Father of love and mercy that can arouse in the hearts of humans a spirit of solidarity and sharing.

I was surprised how many times the word "Happy" or "Blessed" comes back in the liturgical texts in February. From February 3, at the song of communion, the "Blessed are the poor" appears. Then the next day, 2 other beatitudes are stated: The Merciful and the Pure Hearts. February 8: "Happy are you if you are insulted, if you are persecuted for my sake ..." February 10: "Blessed are those who cry ... those who are hungry and thirsty for justice ..." I came to think that February was becoming, this year, the month of the "Beatitudes". Sometimes they are beatitudes that arouse different inner



*On the move, you poor earth,
because a flower, like the sun,
can flourish there*



attitudes, such as: "Happy who fears the Lord ...!" (February 14) "Happy man whose fault is taken away ..."

The month ends with the Psalm, February 28: "Happy is the person who puts his faith in the Lord." What I wish you each and every one. Is it not this, to live the Beatitude: "Blessed are the poor, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. "? 💜

Ottawa celebrated 50 years of Faith and Sharing



*By Isabelle Frappier,
coordinator, Ottawa*

2018 was not only a year of monthly meetings in Ottawa but also of commemoration and reminiscence. From the first retreat animated by Jean Vanier on August 30, 1968 until today, we have a long road behind us. Fifty years of Faith and Sharing retreats and monthly meetings, there is a lot to celebrate.

For this occasion, we gathered on October 6, 2018 in the afternoon to celebrate, sing, pray and bear witness to Faith and Sharing. Among our guests was Archbishop Terrence Prendergast, who knew Faith and Sharing when he was working in Halifax. There was also Madeleine Séguin, founding member, as well as old and new members. We remembered the beginning of Faith and Sharing in Ottawa as well as its new start in 2016.



Of course we could not ignore Jean Vanier's 90th birthday. We all signed a giant card that was sent to France, writing our wishes expressing gratitude for what he is and for the Word of God that he proclaimed and spread in the course of all these years. He gave us the taste of Jesus in whom we find our brothers and sisters.



We concluded our afternoon by joining Saint-Gabriel parishioners to celebrate mass: what a wonderful way to give thanks for all good things coming from our creator.

Long live Faith and Sharing! 💜

Tributes to Louise Bergeron

By Jean-Claude Lizotte, Quebec City

February 5, 2019, our great friend Louise left us to go to her Lord.

She was our model to all because of her attachment to Faith and Sharing. She was very involved in our community she left us as a legacy. She was one of the founders who gave her life for almost fifty years.

She has worked with several communities of Faith and Sharing, Sherbrooke, Montreal, Jonquiere, Chicoutimi and many others in Quebec and outside Quebec as a member of the North American committee and publisher of the North American bulletin.

The saying she often repeated with conviction was: "Faith and Sharing one day, Faith and Sharing always."

She was very close to the poor and destitute in Quebec City. She had no barrier to help them.

Today I give thanks to the Lord for putting Louise on my way. I learned a lot from her and her example allowed me to live in a community where it is good to meet and share our faith.

May Louise be fully happy in the arms of the Lord.



By Céline Savard, Quebec City

On our Day of Prayer on February 23, 2019, we paid tribute to Louise Bergeron, a pioneer of Faith and Sharing in Quebec City. Touching testimonials were given to her.

Daughter of doctor, wife of doctor, Louise could have led a very different life by turning a blind eye to social injustice, poverty, suffering... On the contrary, Louise, very young, chose the path of the Gospel. She put all her talents at the service of others. She had inside her the strong desire to improve the condition of people who suffered physically or psychologically.

As I reflect on her entry into the Kingdom, an excerpt from the Gospel of St. Matthew comes to my mind: "Come, blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom which I have prepared for you since the foundation of the world. Because I was hungry and you gave me food... sick and you visited me..." One can easily imagine that many people whom she helped on earth were there to welcome her with the Father.

I believe that Louise will now be a good ambassador for us to the Lord.

Let's entrust her, in particular, our worries about the future of Faith and Sharing. She repeated to us so often: Faith and Sharing one day, Faith and Sharing always.

By Thérèse Jobin, Pont Rouge

This is the first time I am writing for Heart-to-Heart bulletin. I wanted to offer my perception of Louise Bergeron as a pillar of Faith and Sharing.

Yes ! Yes ! What a great lady Louise Bergeron is.

Louise, woman of the people of God, was married to Jacques Bergeron her husband. As Jacques was a physician by profession, Louise had everything to live a luxurious life, but she chose to implement her baptized life. Louise, a person of many gifts, showed an unusual personality. Always faithful to Jesus, she knew how to bear fruit with her gifts. To always serve others.

Louise had no barriers when it came to spreading the Word and helping her brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ. Dedicated, generous, energetic, self-giving, here are some qualities that personified her being, in addition to being led by the Word of God that she embodied in her life. Louise was a person more inhabited by humility than by pride.

Driven by her gift of generosity, after a period of time with her future husband, she received a medical confirmation that she could not have a child. At the reply of what Louise had just told him, Jacques brought her a solution to this dilemma, saying that it would always be possible to adopt children if she wanted to. As generous as they were, they adopted 4 children, 2 girls and 2 boys. Like all families, she had to go through many difficulties, but her crosses were there to make her grow and to be what she became in the people of God.

Her generosity extended well beyond her family. Sometimes she welcomed people who came from outside to attend either a retreat or a day of prayer, or just as friends of Faith and Sharing. When people came across her and took the opportunity to speak to her, it was not long before she told them about the Faith and Sharing group, not to mention the invitation for these people to come to attend.

I could not say how many people joined because of Louise and so many excellent comments are made about her. While attending Faith and Sharing, many regulars had chosen her as their second mother, since she knew how to listen to wounded people.

On my part, I can not ignore the help she has given our family. Even when it came time for me to live near Quebec City, my youngest son Robert Roussel came to live near Louise's house. She had all sorts of regular visits with him. So she became his second mother and confirmation godmother. Robert liked her a lot. Even when he moved to Montreal, he regularly inquired with me about her state of health, since the death of Jacques her husband.



Today I can say that even though physically she cannot be seen with our eyes, she will always be present if we know how to welcome her as she has always done.

In closing, I say to you, Louise, thank you a thousand times for all that you have been for my own family and for all the people of God, mainly in the name of the members of Faith and Sharing.

By Jana Létourneau, Sherbrooke

I met Louise in Val Morin during the Faith and Sharing Retreats in 1976-77. When I lived in Quebec City for a few months, thanks to her, I was able to attend Faith and Sharing meetings in Quebec City because she was kind enough to pick me up and I could go in her car.

I had good phone conversations with Louise, and she sometimes came to visit me in Montreal.

She has kept her great simplicity and interest in the "little ones".

By Françoise Gagnon, Quebec City

On the occasion of the death of Louise Perrin Bergeron, it is imperative for me to share some reflections on her life.

Since 1985, I have been a member of the Faith and Sharing Community of Quebec City. That's where I met Louise. Through her constant involvement in Faith and Sharing during all these years and even more, thanks to her perseverance and generosity, I have been nourished spiritually. I can assure you that it has made a big difference in my life and in that of many other people.

Today, I am very grateful to her and I encourage all those who feel called to continue as they do their commitment in this beautiful church movement that is Faith and Sharing.

Pray for us, Louise with Jacques, Laurette, France, Michele, the two Yvonne and all ours who recreate, I imagine, the Community in the afterlife.

Goodbye and thank you again. Rest in peace.

By Lise Morin, Sherbrooke

Dear Louise,

Would I find the right words to express my gratitude for your life on earth? Even if your ultimate departure to the Father brings me sorrow, I will always feed on the greatness of soul that inhabited you.

It is true that for you, Louise, each person represented a sacred history to which you knew how to offer a certain dignity. No matter the differences, you found, with patience and confidence, the gifts and values that perfume each heart. Believe, understand and love your neighbor so that he finds his place and his mission, remained very important to you.

No wonder you are one of the pillars of Faith and Sharing in Quebec City because, in your way, you embodied its spirit. In the most beautiful simplicity and in constant service, you welcomed your brothers and sisters as gifts sent by God. You hoped that the retreats and prayer meetings would increase the best, so as not to focus only on the wounds. The Faith and Sharing community filled your life with hope and happiness, inspiring you with the spirituality of Jean Vanier in front of the blessings of the weak.

Personally, I had the immense privilege to know you and to walk with you, inside an immutable and sweet sincere friendship. This unique relationship, based on mutual respect, deepened our faith in living God's message as best we could.

Tender thanks for your authentic and generous pilgrimage on earth.

May your rest be "to the grace of God," as you often desired.

I love you Louise!



By Robert Roussel, Montréal

Goodbye grandma Louise (great friend of the family), godmother of my confirmation. A thousand and one times THANK YOU for your help, your generosity, your listening, your support, your good humor, that you gave to me, my family and many people of all horizons, rich and poor, big and small.

With you, I have attended good meals including the shepherd's pie with tomatoes instead of corn. I visited your beautiful home in Sainte-Foy with wildflowers. I shared with my parents the beautiful view of the river at your cottage in Saint-Joseph-de-la-Rive.

Now today, you went to join Jacques, your husband, with whom you were married for more than 50 years, as well as your brother Jacques, who will welcome you with open arms, and the others that you had the chance to help. I offer my sympathies to your children Denis, Claire, René and Anne, and Daniel that I had the chance to know as grandchildren but there are other grandchildren that I do not remember seeing them but they had a mother, a grandmother and a great-grandmother in GOLD.

Not everyone was honoured like her to be awarded a distinction by a Governor General for her involvement in Quebec society...

Today I'm crying to lose my third grandmother that I really loved... Goodbye Grandma Bergeron. Light us, protect us.

I'm kissing you strongly. Robert XXX



By Andrée Vigneault, Chicoutimi

Of course I keep an excellent memory of this dear Louise. She went to join her Jacques and many friends with whom she gave a good part of her life. She will certainly have a place of choice near her God she loved so much!

If she brought with her what she gave, she would have full hands when arriving in front of her Lord!

May she finally rest in peace, while hoping that she reserves us a small place near her.

I wish my deepest condolences to you all, her family and, of course, to the entire Faith and Sharing Community!

By Françoise Massé osu, Amqui

Yes Louise was a pillar for Faith and Sharing. I regret being too far away to participate in the funeral. I am united with the beautiful and great family of Faith and Sharing and I give thanks to the Lord for all that Louise leaves as an inheritance.

My deepest sympathies to her family.

By Rita Gagné o.s.u., Québec

I have fond memories of Louise and her husband too. She was beautiful with loving presence. She is now Love in Love!

I beg her to continue to love us... what she did on earth... 💜

A word from the English speaking coordinator



*By Claire Donovan,
English-speaking coordinator*

I have been in my position as English speaking coordinator for just over a year now. It has been delightful to connect with and learn about the different Faith and Sharing communities across North America. Each group is so unique, with their own history and personalities and ways of living the charism of Faith and Sharing.

This year I am excited to be part of the team organizing a North American retreat for members of all our communities to come together to meet, share, pray and inspire each other. It will be lovely to meet some of you face to face and deepen our bonds of fellowship and communion.

Many of our groups are fragile, poor. Not necessarily financially, and certainly not in terms of commitment and strong relationships and care. People have shared with me the importance of their Faith and Sharing community in their lives and its life giving balm. However, many are reaching their sunset years. Others are finding themselves stretched with many competing commitments. The future is precarious and unknown in many areas of our lives. Yet we are blessed. We know that God will take care of us. We know we have to rely on God and listen for the whispers of the Spirit - Now, as we always have. Praise be to God! 💜



North-American Faith and Sharing retreat of September 2019



*By Isabelle Frappier,
secretary of the Faith and Sharing Federation*

The next North-American retreat will be from September 8th to 13th, 2019 at the Manresa Jesuit Spiritual Renewal Centre in Pickering, Ontario. We have already started receiving registrations.

THEME OF THE RETREAT:

*“Meeting Jesus in
Community”*

This retreat is offered in a bilingual format. Father Bill Clarke will give the Word. He will alternate his talks in French and English. We will offer simultaneous translation to the other language. This retreat will allow participants to meet members of different Faith and Sharing communities coming from America and different cities across Canada. It will be an opportunity to discover how members from other communities live Faith and Sharing charisma in their own environment.

The spiritual success of the retreat depends upon your prayers. We thank everyone who is or will be praying before or during this retreat, whether you can join in the retreat or not. If needed, you will find a prayer on the Faith and Sharing website (<https://faithandsharing.net/retreat2019.html>). Thank you for your prayers.

Money should not be a hindrance to come to the retreat. The participants will be invited to give what they can afford. For this reason, as we did for the 2016 retreat, we are raising funds in order to allow all who wish to participate regardless of their financial means. Everyone is invited to participate in this fundraising activity according to their heart and means with a small or bigger amount. We are grateful to those who contributed or will contribute financially to make it possible for some of our brothers and sisters in Christ to attend the retreat. We trust in the Providence and people's generosity to make up for the difference.

There is still room. We invite those who want to participate to register the latest August 8, 2019.

Thank you all for your prayers and financial support.

We'll see you in Pickering, God willing.

May God bless you. 💜



Communities of Christian love



By Bill Clarke sj

Jesus promises us that our coming together to pray in his name, he will certainly be there with us. *“Again truly I tell you, if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among you”* (Mt 18: 19-20).

So we have the power to make Jesus present, by coming together in the name of Jesus. We want to invite Jesus to be with us, as did those two disciples on the road to Emmaus whose hearts were inflamed by Jesus presence with them : *“Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?”* As we come together as the Faith and Sharing Community, we can trust the promise of Jesus to inflame our hearts that we continue his mission of building communities of Christian love. 💜



2019 Retreats

Location	Dates	Theme	Animator	Person to contact	Remarks
L'Oasis de la Charité Rouyn-Noranda (Qc)	March 29 – 30	"Accompany each other, following the example of Jesus"	Jean Éliothère Luxama	Gisèle & Émilien Labelle 819-762-2515 Guylaine Boisvert 819-764-4660 guylaine.boisvert@hotmail.com	Open retreat Bring your lunch
Portland (Oregon)	May 13 – 16			Cathleen Corbett cathleencorbett33@gmail.com	"Abbey Days"
Camp St. John Jacksonville (Florida)	May 19 - 23		Fr. Ron Camarda Sr. Maureen Kelley	Rebecca Aleman 904-230-7447 r Aleman@ccbjax.org www.ccbjax.org/faith-sharing	
Saint Mary Center Leavenworth (Kansas)	May 24 – 26	"A Light in the Darkness"	Mimi Harmon	Sr. Lucy Walter 913-758-7517 lucyscl@hotmail.com	30 th anniversary
Salle des Oeuvres Valleyfield (Qc)	June 3	"Together in peace with Jesus"	Marc Rioux	Julie Prigent 450-373-1956 pregent.julie@bell.net	1 day retreat Shared meal
N.-D.-des-Neiges Church Montréal (Qc)	July 9 – 11	"Your faith has saved you. Arise; go."		Max Saint Louis 514-735-5884 maxstlouis15@gmail.com	Open retreat Bring your lunch
Notre Dame College, South Euclid, near Cleveland (Ohio)	July 18 - 21	"Our Brokenness is our Gift"	Fr. Dan Schlegel	Rose Weigl, 440-785-6074 rweigl@roadrunner.com Carol Zumack caz11643@gmail.com	With children and youth programs
St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center Detroit (Michigan)	August 3		Janene Ternes from <i>Prayer in Motion</i>	Pat Mueller: 248-661-9041 paulmueller1@juno.com Vivian Spence: viviespence@hotmail.com	Day of Reflection
Bethlehem Retreat Center Nanaimo (BC)	August 11 – 16	"The Community of the Beloved"	Michael Hryniuk	Terri McCormack 250-465-2080 littleriverk9@gmail.com	Fund raising : www.gofundme.com
Ste-Angèle of St-Malo Church Quebec (Qc)	August 19 – 21	"Life is a miracle, faith is a miracle"	Louissette Pelletier Fr. Jean Picher	Jean-Claude Lizotte 418-831-0125 jclizotte@gmail.com www.foietpartage.org	Open retreat Bring your lunch
"Manresa" Center Pickering (Ontario) near Toronto	September 8 - 13	"Meeting Jesus in community"	Fr. Bill Clarke	Claire Donovan 250-898-8322 merryfish@shaw.ca Jean Roy 819-822-3172 jea_r@videotron.ca	North American Retreat faithandsharing.net/retreat2019.html